

Religion and State Coexistence in Islamic politics and its Impact on Democratization.

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Abstract

The progress of democratization in Muslim countries has been slower than other countries around the World. Several factors have contributed to this phenomenon .The lack of separation between religion and state is one of them. In this paper, the separation of state and religion is studied from the beginning of Islam, fourteen centuries ago, until the present. It was found that, apart from a short period during the Prophet Mohammad's life and the four Caliphs that followed him, separation between state and religion was the norm with the rulers exerting control over religious institutions. The first break in this pattern was the Islamic Republic of Iran 1979 which introduced Vilaya-i-faqih, the (guardianship of the jurisconsult). The concept that in Islam there is no separation between state and religion is wrong and should not affect the development of democracy in the Muslim world.